

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
16 March 2006 (16.03.2006)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2006/028501 A2

(51) International Patent Classification: **Not classified**

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/US2005/006643

(22) International Filing Date:
28 February 2005 (28.02.2005)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/548,515 26 February 2004 (26.02.2004) US

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

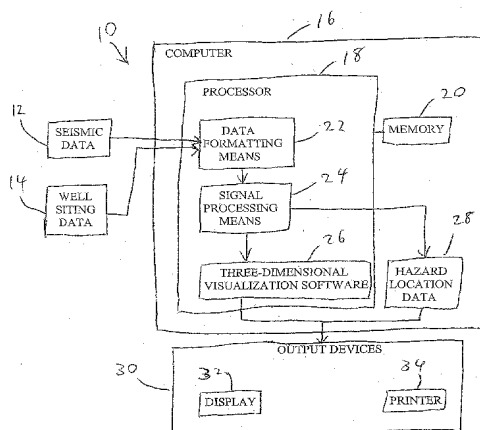
(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: PREDICTION OF SHALLOW DRILLING HAZARDS USING SEISMIC REFRACTION DATA



(57) Abstract: Shallow drilling hazards, such as karsts, caves, voids and unconsolidated discontinuities, that can pose significant risks to exploration and development well drilling operations are detected employing seismic refraction data on which a series of attribute analyses are performed, the resulting data being further processed to provide a three-dimensional visualization. Refracted wave raypaths are highly distorted by encountering a karst feature with the occurrence of backscattering absorption. The resultant energy recorded at the surface receivers is significantly reduced as compared to refracted waves recorded by other receivers where no karsting is present. Multiple refractors are subjected to a relatively simple and rapid processing using commercially available software to track these differences and to map them in the near surface to improve the siting of wells and to alert drilling engineers and crews to the possibility of encountering the hazard.